



EMPOWERING WOMEN IN TIMES
OF CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

2020 Annual Report

*“Thank you for giving me back
my life and mental health.”*

–2020 Client

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Who We Are

Mission

The mission of The Women's Initiative is to provide women with effective counseling, social support and education so they can transform life challenges into positive change and growth.

Vision

All women in our community will have access to innovative, effective, evidence-based mental health care.

Values

We believe every woman has a capacity for healing that, once supported, results in better mental and physical health for her, her family and our community. We believe it is critical to address each woman's unique emotional, physical, spiritual and cultural needs and strengths. We are committed to providing compassionate care that maintains the highest standard of excellence in an environment that is welcoming, safe and supportive.



Dear Friends,

The TWI model of care is based on the belief that our mental health is inextricable from our circumstances—our identity, our history, and the life challenges we face. In 2020, we saw this truth play out in sometimes devastating ways: Rates of depression and anxiety rose dramatically for so many due to pandemic-related loss and isolation, as well as the all too frequent examples of discrimination and violence. And for those long-impacted by systemic oppression, these impacts were even worse. But, in spite of everything, 2020 was also a testament to the resilience of individuals and the community. People took action for positive change in powerful ways—to protest injustice, to support the vaccination effort, to care for a family member or neighbor, to ask for help.

At The Women’s Initiative, we particularly honor the courage of all those who embarked on journeys toward wellness in this time. In 2020, despite major disruption, our counseling impact expanded, and we provided a record number of counseling sessions—a total of 6,705, a 7% increase over 2019. As one client shared: “I’m very grateful for the services I received. You all are a blessing. [I have] more peace of mind and ability to cope with the hardships in my life.”

As in many organizations, the pandemic affected our ability to do group work and community outreach, and required adaptation and innovation. Virtual social support and mind-body offerings were created and rolled out, and these programs helped reduce isolation and provided vital self-care and coping strategies to hundreds of people in our community.

For all of these efforts, we applaud the expertise and compassion of our truly exceptional staff. And we extend our deep gratitude to the many community members who, recognizing the mental health impact of the pandemic, gave so generously to support our mission. We are so grateful for your support.

Sincerely,



Marge Connelly

Marge Connelly, Board Chair



E.Irvin

Elizabeth Irvin, LCSW, Executive Director

2020 at a Glance

6,705

Number of counseling sessions provided

2,709

Individuals served through all our core programs

90%

Percentage of clients who have been victims of crime including domestic abuse and sexual violence

91%

Percentage of clients who attained coping skills for their situation

\$1.7M

Funds raised through compassionate community support

36

Appearances in news media, podcasts and YouTube videos to support community through a time of isolation and acute mental health need



2020: Supporting Community Resilience

Our goal is to provide access to life-saving care that is trauma-informed and culturally responsive. During the coronavirus pandemic and a year of ongoing racial trauma, The Women's Initiative provided our vital mental health services in new ways.

Highlights from a year of transformation and adaptation:

- All mental health counseling services were offered via phone or video calls starting in March 2020
- New hires strengthened Sister Circle Program for BIPOC women and Bienestar Program for Latinx women
- Partnership with Sentara Martha Jefferson led to new virtual daytime support group for Black women
- Outreach through social media and local news provided psychoeducation and self-care skills for pandemic stress
- We prioritized staff wellness to avoid burnout, ensuring our compassionate care is always available to the community

Voices of Healing

I used to be unable to close my bathroom door without a panic attack from past trauma due to domestic violence, and now I close it multiple times a day without a second thought!

I've found strength in myself that I thought was lost forever, but not the hard strength I needed to survive. A natural strength that doesn't need to be projected to feel safe. I feel more at peace and capable and have many more tools to help when I'm depressed or anxious. Juanika's voice—"So what are you doing for self-care?"—floats through my head often, and while I jokingly am annoyed by the question, I find it extremely beneficial. She has changed my life. Friends and family both have said I am much more "chill" now. I feel at peace within myself most of the time.

I always tell people about the Women's Initiative and how you helped me when I couldn't help myself. All I needed to do was dial a number, and you took care of the rest. And when dialing a number is daunting and scary for someone depressed, anxious, and traumatized...that is a huge gift. Thank you for giving me back my life and mental health. God bless each and every one of you....I wouldn't have had the capacity both financially and mentally to do this on my own. You all made it possible to begin healing from my trauma.
—2020 Client

Program Impact

In 2020, we provided **2,709** women with vital mental health services, including...

860 in Individual and Group Counseling

185 in Social Support

177 in Mind-Body

755 in Education

732 in Outreach

“I felt heard and seen in a way I’ve never experienced. Shell was so compassionate, empathetic and kind. I feel like the rapport was instrumental in my healing process.”

—2020 Client





WELCOMING, COMPASSIONATE, EFFECTIVE CARE.

Healing from even the most difficult circumstances is possible at The Women's Initiative. Our model ensures that this effective mental health care is accessible to members of our community most impacted by systemic oppression.

Client outcomes in our mental health counseling program:

- 83%** increased sense of personal well-being
- 72%** experienced improved social interactions
- 72%** experienced improved interpersonal relationships
- 83%** increased their sense of overall well-being
- 76%** experienced a significant decrease or elimination of symptoms

Who We Serve

- 43%** Percentage of clients who are people of color
- 23%** Percentage of clients who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and/or queer
- 91%** attained coping skills relative to their situation

The majority of our clients live at or below 200% of the poverty line

Common Diagnoses We Treat

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Adjustment disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorders

Our Team

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Shell Stern, MSW
Alyson Stewart, MFT
Shelly Wood, LCSW
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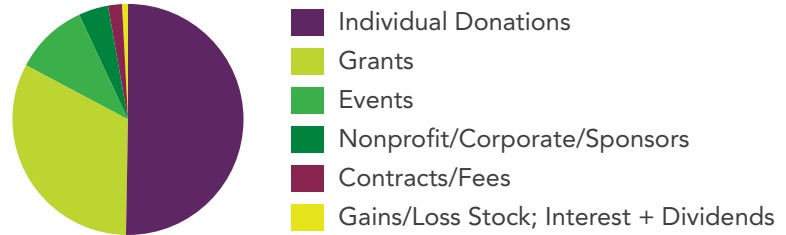




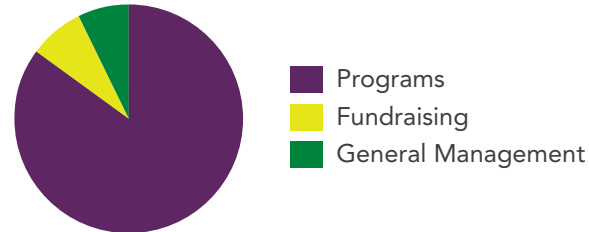
Financial Overview for 2020

2020 was a year of relentless uncertainty. Through it all, there was one thing we knew we could always count on...YOU.

Total Income: \$1,732,400



Total Expenses: \$1,688,390



Broad-based community support makes our work possible. In 2020, 86¢ of every dollar donated went directly to serving clients.

Community Partners

We partner with dozens of agencies and organizations in our community to maximize our ability to reach and serve those who otherwise would not have access to affordable, effective mental health care. These relationships also ensure unduplicated services, warm handoffs during the referral process and bridges to care for all community members.

Brooks Family YMCA
Carver Recreation Center
Central Virginia Clinicians of Color Network
Charlottesville Free Clinic
Chihamba
Child Health Partnership
City of Promise
Common Ground Healing Arts
Community Mental Health & Wellness Coalition
Creciendo Juntos
Friendship Court
Greater Charlottesville Trauma Informed Care Network
Greenstone on 5th
International Rescue Committee (IRC)
Jefferson Area Board of Aging (JABA)
Jefferson School African American Heritage Center
Latino Health Initiative
Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville/Albemarle
Mothering Circle of Charlottesville

Network2Work
Paramount Theater
PFLAG Blue Ridge
Piedmont Virginia Community College
Planned Parenthood South Atlantic
ReadyKids
Sentara Martha Jefferson Starr Hill Health Center
Sexual Assault Resource Agency
Shelter for Help in Emergency
Sin Barreras
Southwood
Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Clinical
Consultation Group
UVA Cancer Center
VCU School of Social Work
Virginia Discovery Museum
Virginia Festival of the Book
Westhaven Nursing Clinic
Wildrock
WriterHouse

Volunteers

VOLUNTEERS DONATED 1,890 HOURS (OR 36+ HOURS PER WEEK) TO TWI IN 2020

Program Volunteers

Sophie Abramowitz

Tonia Alexander

Shawna Bass

Cecelia Baum

Phyllis Binder

Kelly Bryant

Annabelle Castleman

Joanna Chacho

Jane Cornelius

Katelyn Durkin

Vivian Feggans

Emma Ferreria

Carmelita Gaines

Bonnie Gill

Katherine-Scott Gilliam

Riah Gonzales-King

Gleibys Gonzalez

Shanti Gurung

Britton Horne, MSW

Elizabeth Howard

Ellen Jones, MEd

Stephanie Kaiser

Divya Kalluri

Sultana Karim, MA

Marylouise Kelley

Holly Kennedy, LPC

Carrington Kernodle

Kristina King

Charlotte Knipp

Cherrie Kowk

Monica Luna

Ellen Markowitz

Cat McCue

Wendy Miller

Lydia Moyer

Christy Pagels, LPC

Jennifer Phillips, PhD

Christine Platt, PhD

John Rogers, PhD

Ana Rosefsky

Susan Schiffer

Kris Shafer

Jennifer Shen, LPC

Bellamy Shoffner

Sheron Sinclair

Gail Smith

Alejandra Smith

Audrey Stefenson

Circe Strauss

Nancy Summers

Miranda Trent, NP

Maren Ward, LCSW

Mitzi Ware

Kathryn

Webb-Destefano

Sandy Werner

Elaine Zagami, LPC

Girls' Night In Committee

Catherine Brown,
Co-Chair

Logan MacKethan,
Co-Chair

Colleen Bassett

Carolyn Beach

Mary Blanton

Gardy Bloemers

Antoinette Brewster

Katharine Brooks

Carmen Carver

Scheline Crutchfield

Lynn Dengel

Marcela Foshay

Lauren Gartland

Ginger Graham

Bryce Harris

Bebe Heiner

Anne Jones

Barkley Laing

Nicole Lynch

Louise McNamee

Alicia Milligan

Christina Teague

Family Variety Show Committee

Erika Jack,
Co-Chair

Natasha Lawler,
Co-Chair

Susan Sheeran,
Co-Chair

Maylisa Baldwin

Alexandra Bracey

Hobby Holmes Cole

Kristin Cory

Cassie Guy

Lily Joseph

Laurie Kelley

Sarah Krishnaraj

Jill Ashley Lerner

Meredith McClellan

Bunny (Jess)

McLaughlin

Maggie Noland

Monica Prichard

Tricia Ramsey

Heather Sieg

Kacie Snellings

2020 Fundraisers – Rising to the Occasion

Having support during challenging times is essential to one's mental health. So when the pandemic forced society into isolation, our event committee members found inspiring ways to safely gather.

Girls' Night In

A VIRTUAL SOIRÉE IN SUPPORT OF TWI

Over 100 guests attended this event which raised \$100k+ and shed light on increased mental suffering as a result of Covid-19.



Committee members gather to kick-off the celebration.

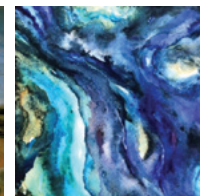
Special thanks to **Marisa Vrooman**, owner of Orpha Events, for bringing love and creativity to our events for 10 years!



Amazing Artists

Lyndi Angermeier
Karen Blair
Vicki Brown
Elizabeth Cobb
Scheline Crutchfield
Carmen Day
Lesli DeVito
Michelle Gagliano
Cassie Guy
Abby Kasonik

Logan MacKethan
Georgia Mason
Beatrix Ost
Ana Rendich
Donna Robertson
Suzanne Tanner
Krista Townsend
Sarah Trundle
Kathy Walmsley
Molly Wright
Cate West Zahl



Paintings: "Untitled" by Carmen Day, "Outlying" by Molly Wright, "Vitality in Blue" by Elizabeth Cobb, LCSW, TWI Therapist

Our Generous Sponsor



Family Variety Show

A LIVE-STREAMING INTERACTIVE EVENT FEATURING A ZOO, A BEAR AND OLD-TIMEY FARE

This family-centered event raised \$100k and showcased an unforgettable array of performers.



Dave Matthews' talents as a singer/songwriter are celebrated worldwide and millions of music lovers faithfully follow his every move. The Dave Matthews Band's monumental philanthropic endeavors truly inspire! We were so honored that Dave chose to join us virtually to perform a powerful acoustic rendition of "Gray Street" in support of our mission.



"I am excited to voice my support for The Women's Initiative and all the work they do to support mental health in Charlottesville. Everyone needs help sometimes. We all have times when we feel anxious and when we feel sad and down, and it's important to know you're not alone. I want to encourage you to reach out ... Help is all around you when you need it."
—Malcolm Brogdon, NBA Basketball Player

Performers, In Order of Appearance

Bebe Heiner, *TWI Founder*
Christine Eichler, *Foxboro Farm*
Cynn timer Davis, *Owner of Bellair Farm*

Jennifer Tidwell & Thadd McQuade, *Theatre Artists C'Villains*

John Rhea, *Balloon Artist*
Ladi Smith & Sarah FitzHenry
Gallatin Canyon

Barn Party Bear vs. the Shark!

Dave Koehn, *Official Voice of the Cavaliers*

Kyle Guy, *NBA Basketball Player*

Malcolm Brogdon, *NBA Basketball Player*

Dave Matthews



Kiki
Dowell,
Emcee

Sponsors



Our Donors

LEADERS

\$50,000+

Anonymous
Dorothy Batten
Batten Family Fund @ CACF
Dept. of Criminal Justice - Victims of Crime Act
Elhapa Foundation
Heiner Family Fund @ CACF
Maxwell Fund @ CACF
Sarah & Grey McLean
Bertie Deming Smith

NURTURERS

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Anonymous
City of Charlottesville
Natasha & Nick Lawler
Louise McNamee & Peter McHugh
Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital
Sheila McCarthy Weschler & R. Ted Weschler

ADVOCATES

\$10,000 - \$24,999

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Aduivans Relief Fund @ CACF
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Community Emergency Response Fund @ CACF
Marge Connelly & Julie Christopher
County of Albemarle
David and Carolyn Beach Fund @ CACF
Cynthia Keller Davis and Don Swofford
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PARTNERS

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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The Women's Initiative Designated Fund @ CACF

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\$2,500 - \$4,999

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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Molly Wright

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Donna Robertson
Kim Robertson
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Sib Rockwood & Andrew Connell
Vivian Rodriguez Archilla
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Susan Sajadi and Thad Glowacki
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Sarah & Gordon Sutton
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Erika & Robert Viccellio
Marisa Vrooman & Nate Braeuer
Caroline & Jack Walker
Lyn & Russ Warren
Sandra Weavil
Debra Webb
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